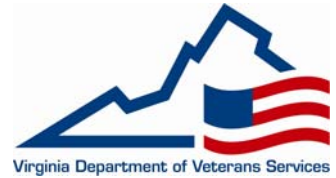


# The Virginia Department of Veterans Services



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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### ***Virginia is for Heroes Conference slated for Hampton Roads***

HAMPTON—A conference examining the needs of military service personnel returning from the Global War on Terror will be held at Fort Monroe on March 26, 2008. *Virginia is for Heroes—Hampton Roads* is modeled after a successful statewide conference held in Richmond in October 2007.

Thousands of military service personnel are returning to Virginia with injuries ranging from combat and operational stress to traumatic brain injury, amputations, burns, disfigurement, and hearing and vision impairments. In most cases, personnel experience multiple wounds, or polytrauma. These injuries affect not only the wounded warrior, they also affect the person's family, his or her employer, and ultimately the community.

*The Virginia is for Heroes* conference held last fall brought together a diverse group of professionals to identify the issues facing military service personnel and veterans of the Global War on Terror. Conference participants identified seven key actions that political leaders, government at all levels, and community organizations must take to meet the needs of veterans and their families. These steps include: Recognizing the impact of deployment; eliminating stigma; reaching and connecting with veterans and their families; building a service delivery infrastructure; making healthcare accessible, housing veterans and preventing homelessness; and hiring veterans. The actions are fully documented in the conference report available at [www.virginiaisforheroes.org](http://www.virginiaisforheroes.org).

“The Hampton Roads conference is the first in a series of regional conferences that we plan to hold,” said Vince Burgess, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. “We want

*Serving those who served.*

professionals at the regional level to look at these actions and determine how government agencies and community organizations in their area can put them into action.”

Conference participants will include clinicians, educators, employers, state and federal government representatives, faith-based leaders, criminal justice professionals, policy makers, personnel from all branches of the military, and veterans and their families. “Although they may not realize it, professionals in all of these fields serve veterans and they, too, are stakeholders in the effort to help veterans successfully return to their families and communities,” explained Anthony Soltys, COL (Retired) US Army, past Board Chair of the Hampton/Newport News Community Services Board.

The conference is being hosted jointly by the Hampton Newport News Community Services Board, Fort Monroe, the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Technology Transfer Center at Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. For more information about the conference and to register, visit [www.virginiaisforheroes.org](http://www.virginiaisforheroes.org).

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